

Message Text

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13

ACTION NEA-10

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P R 091005Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8501

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: JULY 9 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORTING ON LEBANON

1. SUMMARY: JULY 9. MEDIA CONTAINED FRANKER COMMENTS ON SYRO-PALESTINIAN DISAGREEMENTS THAN HERETOFORE WITH EXTENDED CRTICISMS OF "PALESTINIAN DEVIATIONISTS." END SUMMARY.

2. IN CLEARLY INSPIRED ARTICLE, AL-BAATH REPORTED THAT IN HIS LATEST MEETING WITH PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL FRONT, (JULY 7), ASAD EMPHASIZED:

A. SYRIA WOULD NOT BE DEFLECTED BY EFFORTS OF VARIOUS FACTIONS WHICH WOULD DIVERT THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION FROM ITS GOALS;

B. RESISTANCE WAS BEING SUCKED INTO INTERFERENCE IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF LEBANON;

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C. SYRIA WOULD RESIST ANY EFFORTS TO SOW DISSENTION
BETWEEN IT AND THE RESISTANCE AND TO STIP UP CONFESSIONALISM
IN THE LEBANESE FIGHTING.

3. COLUMNIST IN TISHRIIN DENIED THAT SYRO-PLAESTINIAN
RELATIONS HAD REACHED AN IMPASSE, BUT URGED WORK FOR
STRENGTHENING THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN SYRIA AND THE RESISTANCE
TO PROTECT THE LATTER.

4. ARAB LEAGUE. ASAD MET WITH MAHMUD RIAD BEFORE LATTER'S
RETURN TO CAIRO JULY 8. RIAD SAID HE WOULD COME BACK TO
DAMASCUS WHEN SITUATION REQUIRED IT. MEANWHILE, HASSAN
AL-KHULI WILL CONTINUE EFFORTS TO APPLY THE CEASE-FIRE.
PESSIMISTIC COMMENTS BY TUNISIAN FONMIN SHATTI ON LEAGUE'S
MEDIATION EFFORTS WERE BRIEFLY SUMMARIZED.

5. MEANWHILE, VARIOUS "OFFICIAL SOURCES" (INCLUDING SYRIAN
ARAB NEWS AGENCY) REITERATED DENIALS THAT SYRIANS WERE
INVOLVED EITHER IN THE FIGHTING OR IN SUPPLYING ARMS TO THE
LEBANESE FORCES. AT THE SAME TIME, MEDIA FEATURED STATEMENTS BY
LEBANESE DEPUTIES FROM THE BEKAA (SKAFF AND HRAWI) THAT
SYRIAN FORCES IN THE BEKAA HAD RESTORED NORMAL LIFE TO THE
VALLEY AND THAT THEY WOULD WITHDRAW AS SOON AS PEACE AND
SECURITY RESTORED.

6. PALESTINIAN DEVIATIONISTS. BAATHI CONTROLLED "NATIONAL
COMMAND OF THE UNIFIED PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS" ATTACKED
THE PLO EXCOMM FOR AVOIDING ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.
THIS VIOLATED PLO GOALS AND WAS AGAINST THE WILL OF
THE PALESTINIAN MASSES. IN ANOTHER ARTICLE, A SPOKESMAN
FOR THE LEBANESE BAATH REGIONAL COMMAND
DESCRIBED THE REIGN OF TERROR BY ARMED GANGS DOMINATING
WESTERN BEIRUT. SPOKESMAN OF THE LEBANESE NASSERISTS
CITED FURTHER SUCH EXAMPLES IN THE SHOUF AND SOUTHERN LEBANON.

7. BATTLE REPORTS. SYRIAN MEDIA CARRIED MORE DETAILED BATTLE
REPORTS ON THE ZGHORTA-SHIKKA FRONTS IN THE KURA AND BEIRUT
THAN PREVIOUSLY.

8. COMMENT: IMPLICATION IS CLEAR THAT SYRIA WILL BE READY
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AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME TO ASSIST THE "WILL OF THE PALESTINIAN
MASSES" INCLUDING HELPING TO CHANGE LEADERSHIP OF THE PLO'S
EXCOMM THEREBY BRINGING IT BACK TO STRAIGHT AND NARROW PATH
OF ACCEPTABLE PALESTINIAN BEHAVIOR.
MURPHY

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